

# CHARITY.

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## A LECTURE

BEFORE THE

ROBERTSON ASSOCIATION,

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BY

JOHN M. BRIGHT.

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# LECTURE.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I am not before you on this occasion to rehearse the triumphs of Art and Science, nor to lead you through the flowery walks of Literature; nor to lift you to the summit of the poet's mount, to witness the displays of genius, darting forth its brilliant shafts of light; nor to astonish you with the expansive thought, as it sweeps along with the majestic march of Empires. I come not to challenge your admiration with any such ambitious themes, but to file an humble plea for CHARITY. And, although, the announcement of the theme may come upon your expectations as cold as the breeze from the snow of the mountain, yet is deemed eminently appropriate to the sublime object of the Robertson Association.

We know that upon the softest whisper of our Evangel of mercy, and the slightest echo from her downy tread, our selfishness wakes up, tightens its grasp upon the *purse*, and begins to wrap itself up in its favorite coat of mail, "*charity begins at home.*" We know that it is hard for the soul, long entranced with the siren song of gain, to break the spell, and become responsive to the pensive harp of woe. We know that it is hard to transform avarice into benevolence, power into tolerance, revenge into peace, bigotry into concession, and malice into love.

But, while charity may begin, I will endeavor to show that it does not end at home.

Charity, in its general signification, comprehends both benevolence and beneficence; both love and bounty. It is highly diffusive in its character, like the savor of the salt, permeating and purifying the whole body of humanity. It is of indefinite expansion—throwing its elastic girdle around

home, city, country, world—spanning the bound of time, and stretching with the reach of eternity. It has always in store a smile for your joy, a tear for your sorrow, a balm for your wound, and a hope for your despondency. It always has pity for your infirmities, forbearance for your faults, forgiveness for your injuries, a mantle for your sins, and an example for your imitation. It always has a leading hand for the blind, a crutch for the lame, bread for the starving, apparel for the naked, shelter for the homeless, medicine for the sick, consolation for the dying, a burial for the dead, a flower for his grave, and a souvenir for his memory. It is always ready to furnish reason for railing, harmony for dissension, mercy for wrath, meekness for arrogance, the plow-share for the sword, the pruning-hook for the spear, and the voice of the turtle for the funeral croak of the vulture over the dead of the battle plain.

In its offices, while it is as gentle as the lamb, it is as bold as the lion, braving every form of peril, disease and death. Unostentatious in spirit, it often, in the stillness of the night, drops its bounties round the huts and tents of the suffering, like the manna in the wilderness. But its eulogy may be pronounced in a single word—a word which combines the wealth and beauty of all languages, like the wealth and beauty of a world concentrated in a single gem—it is CHRIST-LIKE.

To feel the full force of our obligation to charity, we should remember that its origin is divine. Transferring ourselves back in thought, we hear the deep primeval silence of eternity first broken by the shout of the morning stars over the sublime outburst of creation from the heart of Divine Benevolence. As the crown of the work we see the firmament above, blazing with unnumbered worlds; just below, fowls in trooping flocks, bathing their bright plumage in their zone of air; next all the fish, in merry gambols, leaping from the seas to catch the sun's first descending rays upon their silver scales; then all the earth, like a bride arrayed, smiling in her robes of verdure, fruits and flowers; then all the beasts bounding in joy over the virgin plains; and last, man, in his Creator's image formed,

delegated Lord over all other breathing or unbreathing things, rejoicing with the earth as his possession, Eden as his home, and *and all his without a toil.*

Again, man is tempted—falls—the sweat of labor pours from his brow; he is vexed and torn with the thorns and brambles of life, he stoops under a load of sorrow, and death smites him again to dust. After he had thus marred the pristine grandeur of his being, another outburst of Divine Benevolence eclipses the former, in the scheme of his redemption.

The world was born and is preserved a child of charity. All nature exhorts us to charity. Obedient to the law of love, the clouds pour out their showers of rain, the sun sows the world with his light and heat, the earth yields her increase, and after our toil and fatigue, night, like a kind mother, gently draws around us her curtains for our repose, while all the shining sapphires, for our example, move in harmony in their spheres above. Or as Aikenside has most beautifully sung:

“The rolling waves, the sun’s unwearied course,  
The elements and seasons, all declare  
For what the Eternal Maker has ordained  
The powers of man; we feel within ourselves  
His energy divine; He tells the heart  
He meant, He made us to behold and love  
What he beholds and loves, the general orb  
Of life and being; to be great like Him,  
Beneficent and active.”

After witnessing the displays of benevolence in creation and redemption, and beholding nature streaming with bounty from all her pores, what must we think of the man whose being is like the sponge, an unsightly formation of suction tubes, knowing no law but that of absorption? The character is stamped with the burning seal of a poet’s scorn:

“The man may breathe, but does not live,  
Who much receives, but nothing gives,  
Whom none can love, whom none can thank,  
Creation’s blot—creation’s black.”

To illustrate more fully the dignity and importance of charity,

let us imagine its absence from the world; that good will and love are banished from the heart of man. We look to the family, which was before the nursery of the tenderest earthly affections, and it has become like a brood of scorpions, which are said at times to sting each other to death in the parent nest; the community has become a battle-field of plunder, strife and blood; the temple of the living God has become a den of thieves; the State has burst all the bands of law and order, and floats a shattered wreck on the "boiling pool" of anarchy, and

"Avarice, envy, pride,

Three fatal sparks, have set the hearts of all

On fire."

and now unite and wrap the moral world in general conflagration.

To illustrate still further. As the physical world is bound together by the law of attraction, so the moral world is bound together by the law of love. If the law of attraction were suspended, our globe, which is nothing but a mass of atoms held together by attraction, would be dissolved into floating particles, the worlds above us would be unsphered, and in like manner dissolved to atoms. Now let us imagine some mighty wind to represent man's lawless passions, turned loose upon the world, and the wild commotion of the storm-driven atoms could alone parallel the frightful wreck of the moral world without charity. But we do not mean to leave the physical world in atoms and adrift upon the bosom of the storm; we wish now to show with what transporting joy we could look up and see charity, high-throned above the disordered scene, wave her wand of love and still the tempest, reunite the atoms, reënsphere the worlds above, replant the earth beneath our feet, and as it wheels along again exulting round the sun, and radiant with light, let it teach the moral world to make charity its sun and centre, and always live and move within its light and the sphere of its attraction.

Having drawn the sublime moral of charity from the teachings of creation and nature; having shown the wreck of the



universe without charity, and by its reappearance reinstated the disorganised elements; and now, feeling at home again on the earth, I will speak of charity as it should be accommodated to our varied wants.

And first I would suggest that our spirit and scope of charity should be commensurate with the wants of the age. The present is a fast age—a mercenary age—its wing is lightning, its ruling spirit gain. Every department of trade and labor is up and in the list, and avarice goads it on with a spur of fire to maddened speed, and death-like competition for the goal of fortune. The proud spirit of the age may now boast,

“I am the stirrer of the storm,  
The rider of the wind,  
The hurricane I left behind  
Yet with lightning warm.”

And while its eye is dazzled into blindness by the gorgeous splendors of Mammon's temple, and its ear is ravished with the music of its clinking coin, it leaves for charity to hear the wail of woe, which breaks from its path of human desolation, for charity to fly to the relief of down-trodden weakness, plundered innocence, starving helplessness, the halt, the maimed, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the widow, the orphan, the sick, the dying, all wanting the comfort of a melting eye and the bounty of a generous hand.

As want, sorrow and affliction will ever be the sad inheritance of our race, I would suggest that we should cultivate charity as a principle. It should ever be habitual, active, reliable—a pure perennial stream—not the fitful gushings of the wet-weather fountain. A spasmodic charity may be good as far as it goes, but it is both inadequate and unreliable. It may be only the surprise of avarice into bounty, or indifference into action, by some appalling calamity or impending danger; or it may be only the hoardings of a life of avarice and extortion, surrendered in posthumous munificence, to found a name or bribe a goading conscience; or it may be only a professional boon, which young ambition uses as a vaulting board, to mount to

fame and fortune. This is only charity in the rind, but selfishness in the core. If the afflicted brotherhood of man would draw a moral from a heaven-descended wisdom, "love thy neighbor as thyself," we would see the sublime spectacle of a race organized into a mutual insurance and protection company, existing in perpetuity against all the wants and wocs of life.

It is true, selfishness castled in its wealth, and boastful of its independent strength, might scorn the offered leaguc; but ah! experience, that venerable mother of wisdom, has long since taught the world that there are no pillars of human prosperity secure against the rage of the blind Sampson of adversity. Suppose the parent by unceasing toil has reared his fortune mountain high, and that he himself should never feel the tooth of want, not experience the shipwreck of a heart, yet let him cast his bread upon the waters; perhaps after the paternal wealth has fled like loosened avalanches, and wasted like melting snow, under the reckless prodigality of his children, they, in beggared want, may catch the floating bread upon the stream of charity. Then, as we are all involved in the ills of life, we are bound by the laws of nature, and the plainer laws of God, to accredit the claims of charity on each other. He who would deny the obligation makes himself an exile from his race, and forfeits his claim to human sympathy and protection.

It is a lamentable fact, that while the world has been astonished with the wonders, inventions and discoveries of science, rolling in luxury and blazing in splendor amidst the courts of its rulers and the walks of its nobles, and ringing with the renown of its heroes, its bowels of compassion have had but little perceptible enlargement, and not unfrequently they are locked up like frozen fountains—sometimes moving under a sudden thaw of sympathy, then congealing into insensibility; now boastful of a tongue-doughty magnificence, then passing off like clouds and wind without rain; now giving with breaking heart-strings to escape the public brand of niggard meanness, then fastening in its boa coil of avarice on some ill-gotten gain to replace the unwilling tribute; now setting in like a mighty



gulf stream, promising to bear the freight of mercy through different climes and zones, then suddenly sinking, like the river of the desert. And thus the world in the main, has been halting and blundering on, with unmethodized and starveling charity. Although charity has done and is doing much, it has been playing the laggard, and has not come up to its work.

O, that some mighty genius of benevolence, in this age of discovery and invention, would loom up like a pillar of light, and discover to our race the plan through which there shall not be found a single broken-hearted intelligence, nor starving image of God upon his foot stool, without proper sympathy and relief! The glory of such a benefactor would outshine the sun. Such a world-wide enterprise would be mighty, but surely feasible in time. At first our reason recoils at the grandeur of the project. Incredulity views it as a splendid impossibility. Selfishness looks for its consummation only by a miracle of God. But charity "believeth all things hopeth, hopeth all things," and we may yet see her, recruited with celestial faith and vigor, toiling slowly with our wayward planet up and back to God!

While I cannot attempt the projection of such a scheme, I am fully persuaded that nature and providence have furnished ample resources to work out such a sublime destiny for charity. It will not be denied that our race being united into different social compacts, we are all within the pale and reach of human sympathy. It will not be denied that the resources of our earth will support, in comfort, a multiplied population. Now look abroad, and behold abundant means to supply the indigence of our race, floating into the whirlpool of fashion, caprice, gluttony, dissipation and lust, and not only lost to all human good, but multiplying a new progeny of wants and miseries. What abject humiliation and squalid wretchedness do we behold in the midst of metropolitan affluence, and where the profusions of a day might relieve the indigence of a year. To say nothing of the amount squandered in prostitution, I hazard nothing in saying that the astonishing outlay of our nation to besot

itself in ardent spirits would more than relieve our charity indigence.

But how to arouse our sympathies and make them active in the cause of suffering humanity; how to intercept the means that are in the draught of the whirlpool of sensuality, and shift the gravitation towards the channels of human want; and as auxiliary to this, how to elicit the enormous labor which slumbers in the limbs of idleness, and make it self-supporting and tributary to helpless want, constitute the grand problem to be solved.

Can it be accomplished by radicalism, agrarianism, communism, socialism, or any other project of reconstructed government? I answer, no. By what law of justice can you balance the labor of a Hercules against the labor of a dwarf? Can you harmonize the disposition of the miser, who could almost eat his own flesh and drink his own blood, to save his gold, with the disposition of one, who, Esau-like, would sell his birthright for a mess of pottage? Can you reconcile the contentment that would remain in the mud-walled hut, with the aspiration that would roam in the gilded halls of the palace? Can you yoke the fiery energy and accumulating thrift of the one, with the stupid sloth and slack-handed indifference of another? No. The effort to obliterate the right of individual property would result in hereditary feuds, and dash the different elements of society together like the waves of the sea in a storm. And about the time we would suppose the warring strife had exhausted itself into a calm, perhaps we might see some shepherd's crook budding into a monarch's sceptre, to rule both people and property by the "higher law" of necessity.

But the enlightened conviction of all political science is, that every man in justice is entitled to the product of his own labor. Indeed, the law of God waves round him, like a sword, to protect his individual right of property. It commands him to live by the sweat of his brow; it tells you that you must not steal, nor even covet his goods; "that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy all the goods of his labor, is the gift of

God;" clearly implying that he should have the right, while he incurs the responsibility, of using and disposing of it as he may choose; whether to consume it upon his lusts and suffer for the abuse, or lend it to God and receive the reward of a pious usury. Then in vain would we unhinge and reconstruct the established order of government, upon any principle of coercive agrarianism, which will secure the triumph of universal charity in its office of relief.

But is there any latent energy or undeveloped wisdom in the established order of government which can compass the grand object, by regulating the law of labor, the price of productions, or by levying a duty for the poor? Hitherto all attempts to legalize humanity, except to quite a partial extent, have but illustrated the impotence and impeached the wisdom of the government. The wisdom of all the governments of earth, with the experience of centuries, endless legislation, and efficient executive and judicial industry, has been fairly overmatched in legalizing and enforcing what is called *justice*. After government protects itself from internal and external dangers, the rights of person and property, and enforces the obligations of contracts, expressed or implied, private and public, commencing with the obligation of the parent to support his offspring, from the time its eyelids open on the light to majority, and continuing through all the multifarious relations of labor, trade and commerce up to the support of the government itself; after covering all these interests with its protecting shield, the schemes of charity which it may devise and foster, without a greater resulting injury than good, will be few indeed.

We have already suggested the impracticability of equalizing labor. We know that exhausted age, the infirmity of disease, with large dependent families, and many widows and orphans, with no other resource but labor, must fail of subsistence. We know that perhaps the majority of mankind live in perpetual conflict between labor and subsistence, and the same conflict is entailed upon their posterity—sire and son in succession toiling with the stone of Sisyphus. Can the government furnish no

relief by raising the price of labor to a uniform standard? Let us see. All will concede that there is a great disparity in the value of labor, and all will concede that there is an equal disparity in the productiveness of the different soils and other capital with which labor is combined. The productive quality of lands may be partitioned into four imaginary belts or zones. The first is of superabundant productiveness; the second of abundant; the third of subsisting, and the fourth of non-subsisting productiveness. Now suppose the price of labor to be fixed at a uniform maximum standard, every one will perceive that the real value of labor bestowed in the first zone will be greater than the same quantity bestowed in the second, and the second greater than the third, and in the fourth it will be worthless, because the labor will not support itself. Now if the uniform price of labor, as we will suppose, is fixed at what it would actually be worth in the first or superabundant zone, furnishing both subsistence and profit to the laborer, every one will see that it will lessen the profits of the employer of labor in the second zone, because his productions being less, he would have less out of which to pay than the first; and in the third zone, which merely furnished subsistence, the price of labor would take its subsistence, or all the production, and a part of the land or capital, to pay the profit or balance of the price of the labor above its subsistence. And thus as to the fourth zone, the process would result in the ruin of the landlord, by taking his capital to pay the price of labor, and in the ruin of the laborer, because the landlord could no longer employ or pay for the labor. If the laborer in turn should become landlord, by the ascending wheel of fortune, and should employ labor, he then would be upon the descent of the wheel, and share the fate of his predecessor, and every revolution of the wheel would work a similar repetition of ruin.

But suppose all the labor should strike for the first or paying zone, then there would be a glut, and the redundant labor would recoil on the inferior zones to renew the strife with ruin. We might reverse the order and fix the price of labor at mere sub-



sistence in the third zone; then the laborer would realize a subsistence out of the capital of the landlord, without a return of profit, or the landlord would be forced to support the laborer on his capital without remuneration. But in the first and second zones the landlord would reap all the net profit of the labor, while the laborer would toil for a subsistence (that being the price of his labor), and for the aggrandizement of the landlord. In connection with this take into consideration the actual inequality in the value of the labor of the different operatives, it will be sufficient to show that no government can ever possess itself of that exactness in the infinite details of labor, which is necessary to enact its real, or even approximate value. But it must be content as it has done to leave labor as a commodity in the market, to bring whatever it is really worth, and to the justice and humanity of the employer.

Can the government succeed any better in lowering the price of productions, so as to bring them within the reach of the poor? If it could not regulate the price of labor, it surely cannot regulate the price of productions which are the result of that labor. For example, take the productions of the soil, which are greatly dependent upon the seasons. Can the government usurp the power of the deity, and send the early and the later rain, control the drought, heal the blight of vegetable disease, curb the desolating floods, chain the infuriated winds, equalize the cost of transportation to market, and adjust the value of labor in a year of scarcity with a year of plenty? Never. Perhaps the producer is depending upon the highest price of his productions in an unfettered market, to meet his obligations to the merchant, mechanic and physician, and he could not claw off from the lee shore of bankruptcy unless the merchant's goods, the mechanic's labor, and the physician's services are scaled in an equal ratio with his productions. Hence we are forced to the conclusion that the State cannot work out the grand equation of capital, profit and labor, by any algebraic transposition of the different elements; and it must be content to leave the price of productions, as one of the elements, to be



regulated by the conference of consumer and producer in the market, and leave all the different departments of economic industry to work themselves together as links, into a harmonious chain.

But some political economists, however, desperate to uphold the price of labor, Alexander-like would cut the Gordian knot which they cannot untie; that is they would lay an arrest on the increase of the poor, and thus make labor high by making it scarce. This victory they say can be achieved only by the voluntary moral force of the laborer. Such a vicious reasoning, while it begs the question of a compulsory interposition, still cannot force the camel through the needle's eye. Would it not require a superhuman logic indeed, to induce the poor to wind up their branch of the race, like a broken bank, by any such unnatural and self-imposed restraint? The tendrils of their social affections will continue to grasp an object of love; they must, they will have something to be kind to, and they will ever obey the law of their being, "increase and multiply." What, arrest the increase of the poor? No. Pestilence has wasted them; famine has withered them; war has devoured them; the earthquake has swallowed them; the volcano has buried them under its burning lava; the seas and floods have engulfed them; steam and gunpowder explosions have blown them into fragments; labor has exhausted them; ordinary disease has exacted an unequal tribute; and intemperance has scourged them with decimating wrath, and still the wave of each on-coming generation drifts them on the shore of existence, in unsubdued and undiminished numbers.

But cannot the State, by the exertion of its sovereign power, in a general poor tax, interpose a barrier to the swelling flood? Experience has demonstrated that all laws for the relief of the poor, because they are poor, with few exceptions, have fallen in wrath and not in mercy on the nation. Such experiments are but illustrations of the paradox in Pharaoh's dream—the lean kine eating up the fat kine. Whenever the poor from idleness, intemperance or prodigality, find that the resources of the

industrious, frugal and wealthy, are under legal pledge for their support, the horrors of starvation, which furnish one of the grandest incentives to labor, are withdrawn. Thousands of the vast multitudes who continually toil on the verge of want for subsistence, finding that a part of their scanty gains is sequestered by law to feed and clothe others in idleness and improvidence, take refuge in pauperism themselves to escape the burden of labor and the goads of taxation. This new recruit to pauperism increases the burden on the remaining tax-payers, and then another and another recruit, following the first, and being secure of bread by the bounty of the State they continue to form matrimonial alliances, and soon a generation springs up, imitating parental idleness and dependence, and besieging the State for bread, and darkening the very land with numbers. All the fountains of private charity are sealed up by the coercive duty of the State; and the State, now unable to defend itself against the alarming siege of pauperism provoked by its own misrule, sees in itself the reality of Longfellow's graphic picture of "the sick or wounded bison," besieged with gathering flocks of vultures,

"Till the air is dark with pinions."

Dr. Chalmers, in speaking on this subject, says: "The holders of property can see no end to the exactions of pauperism. And the nurselings of pauperism with their constantly increasing number and necessities, will overpass every limit in their aggressions upon property. The growing alarm on the one side, the growing distress on the other, form the sure elements of interminable warfare, which, if not prevented by timely reformation, must at length effervesce into an anarchy that will alike sweep off all the good and evil of present institutions, and make room on the desolated void for the foundations of a new modeled commonwealth."

But time would not permit us to eumerate all the evils, physical, moral, social and political, flowing from a poor's law. Our object is rather to show that such a law cannot relieve, nor make head against the increase of pauperism. It proceeds upon a

fatal error in principle. Ostensibly founded in benevolence, but really offering a bounty to idleness and vice. The State, however, might safely and far better subserve the ends of benevolence, by bestowing a bounty to elicit an optimism of skill, labor and production. The State might also display an ample munificence by providing for the care of such as are helpless from the inflictions of necessity or nature. None from choice will become diseased, insane, blind, or deaf and dumb. I would, therefore, with most earnest zeal, advocate the establishment by the State, of all suitable institutions for their protection and relief. Indeed, without such monumental evidences, no State can vindicate its claim to an enlightened humanity.

Just here, pardon one step of digression. While our State Capitol soars in solid and massive splendor from yonder enduring hill of rock, and thus enthroned overlooks our metropolis with an air of autocratic majesty, it is but monumental of the *pride and taste* of a gallant State. But after we have surveyed with commingled wonder and admiration, its huge-built dimensions, its graceful proportions, its elegant finish, and its bulwark strength, let us ascend its interior height to feast the vision from a lookout in its lofty dome. First, the city swells before us in undulating beauty and magnificence; next the eye ranges round the circle of suburban elegance, and lingers for a while upon the groves, and lawns, and gardens, and princely mansions, and then looking a few miles to the southward, over rural districts fitly sectioned into farms and teeming with a generous agriculture, the eye is arrested by an imposing building rising from the plain—it is the TENNESSEE LUNATIC ASYLUM—a noble monument of the humanity of our State. And while we gaze upon that retired structure from the crown of the *pride* of our State with a giddy head, the soul becomes warm and expanded with loftier emotion, when by contrasting the motives we see that the sublime spirit of love which prompted the one, as far overtops in moral grandeur the spirit of pride which prompted the other, as, in turn, one structure excels the other in magnificence.

But, returning to our connection of thought, we have shown that a poor's law is entirely inadequate to the relief of pauperism. And even if it had the power of relief, it would stop short of half the work of charity, which seeks to *reform* as well as to *relieve*. Thus we see that the great body of the poor and miserable are transferred from the jurisdiction of *law* to the jurisdiction of *love*. Then we arrive at the conclusion that the great commonwealth of charity is founded in the *emotional nature of man*, and that in it there is somewhere lodged a celestial power and vigor.

I might venture the assertion that the great organic law of this commonwealth is embodied in two articles: 1. Supreme love to God. 2. Love to your neighbor as to yourself. Upon these foundations charity must build her grandeur in time, and her glory in eternity. The government is founded on a principle of voluntary action, each one the constituted sovereign of his own emotions and of his own bounties, and subject alone to the appeals of motive, but all consenting to, and united upon, the reciprocal obligations of love and relief. I venture one step further: that the perfect administration of the government of charity is dependent upon the correct education and discipline of our emotions of love. We see the manifestations of charity in some form or other, in all the ennobling relations of life; but how to bring these different relations under the perfect dominion of charity is a problem beyond my powers of solution. We all, however, can see that these manifestations do exist.

Behold that mother bending in holy watch over her suffering babe, or see her whole soul kindling with the glow of heaven in her face, as she traces in her hopeful boy the falcon eye, the lofty brow and graceful form of his noble sire, and for him toiling with unflinching devotion. This is but the manifestation of charity in parental affection, which borrows no force from the obligation of law to support and protect the child.

But how often is parental affection perverted by the inconsiderate and misdirected zeal of the parent. Instead of looking for the consummation of the work of charity in the child, by



making him industrious, useful, enlightened, benevolent, generous and virtuous, the parent often exhausts all his own energies of life, and offers his own soul and body a sacrifice on the altar of parental affection, to provide an inheritance which will exempt his child from the God-imposed doom of labor, and at last see the end of all his work in an accomplished rake or loathesome debauchee. True charity has her bounds, and all beyond is cruelty.

Again, when we see the lavish bounty of parental care and love, meet with the return of love, obedience and honor from the child, we but see charity in the filial affections. And when the child of mature reflection scorns these sacred obligations, he becomes the accursed of God and man. If his heart grows into petrification under a mother's love and tears; if he strikes the serpent's tooth of ingratitude into the breast that gave him warmth and life; if he lifts his eye in mockery upon parental honor, we may hunt in vain for an oasis of human good in the desert of his soul.

“Ingratitude is treason to mankind,”

and charity proclaims its ban in mercy to our race.

We also see charity in all the gentler amenities of life—courtesy, politeness, meekness, and in tolerance of the opinions of others. With a bigot's zeal it does not impale all who do not concede its own infallibility, nor proclaim all blind who do not see through its own eyes. We also see it in the use of mild, chaste and unoffending language. Knowing that language is the richest commerce of our social joys, its words are all coins from the mint of love. “A soft answer” is the safest electric rod for wrath.

Again, when Israel sung the praises of David's valor, Saul, through envy, was fired with murderous rage, and he twice pursued him, like a wild beast, into the wilderness, to take his life. He was twice in the power of David. The first time David took off the skirt of his robe in the cave of Adullam, but “his eye spared” him. The second time he bore off his



spear and cruse of water as he lay *sleeping* within the trench, and though cntreated, yet he forebore to *smite him*. Here the benevolence of David was the security of Saul, and we see charity manifesting itself in *magnanimity*. And here David gave higher evidence of magnanimity in bearing off the spear and cruse of Saul, than he did when he took off the head of the swaggering giant of Gath.

But in contrast, while Joab was justly renowned for his valor, through revenge he smote Abner, while under the protection of the royal faith of David; and through envy he smote Amasa, because he was promoted to the command of David's army, and his name now comes down to posterity burdened with the curse of his king, and the proverbial execration of centuries. To draw a moral, we see that revenge and envy are as ignoble and degrading, as they are malicious and dangerous. The envious or revengeful man is not to be trusted. He wears for every foe or rival the assassin's dagger, either of steel or of calumny, and nothing but the enchantment of charity can exercise his demon. But so admirable is the virtue of magnanimity, that many now boast the grandeur of their blood from the noble Pocahontas, by whose intercession the savage father was inspired with the exalted sentiment, and thus she stayed the uplifted club, and crowned herself with undying fame as the saviour of the "white man." No wonder that with a heart so rich in love, she returned her Saviour's love and became a christian, and thus added the fairest flower to her wreath of virtues.

But while charity, like nature, is generally mild in all her motions, yet she occasionally bursts in whirlwinds; but then only to purify the atmosphere about her.

Hence when the country is frenzied with internal dissensions, and threatened with disruption and anarchy, we see the statesman, at his country's call, fly from the joys of home to take his stand, like a rampart, before his country's Constitution while the fierce bolts of his eloquence, like leaping thunders from the crags and peaks, light upon the assailing columns of fanaticism and treason, and thus restores his country to reason

and to duty—it is but a higher manifestation of charity in Patriotism, or love of country. Or when the country is threatened with the invading tide of war and her drum beats for rallying valor, we see the gallant chief gird himself for battle, snatch his blessing from the lips of love, then fly with eagle-speed to the post of dreadful duty; and as he mingles in the strife of blood and carnage, a spirit voice rings within his soul, far above the clangor of the battle-trumpet—Fight on! Die for your country! It is but charity, in the love of country, stronger than the love of life!

And again, when we see such a noble patriot, after having led his country's fortunes along the crimson path of war to victory, returning to follow the gentler arts of peace over a pathway strewn with flowers, and spanned with triumphal arches—and greeted by woman's waving kerchiefs—and we hear the booming cannon and the nation's shout proclaim him Benefactor! It is but charity in the ecstacy of gratitude! It is but a nation's *love* leaping up to embrace and press the benefactor to the warm and gushing soul! Yes, it is charity which turns the heart into a temple of gratitude, where the honor of the benefactor dwells, like the Ark of the covenant, secure from sacrilegious touch! It is charity, bursting out in gratitude, which builds all the monuments to attest the benefactor's name.—We see it in all the bronze and marble statues—in the portraits of all the galleries of Art—in the names of children, associations, towns, cities, counties, States and countries—in the national anniversaries, holidays, and festivals—and we see it in the stirring music of national airs—in the glowing eulogy of the orator—in the rapt inspiration of the poet—and in the march of the historian with the urn of memory, like Israel with the Omer of Manna, along the high-way of ages.

Again, when we see man, moved with all the woes of his fellow-man, restoring with his bounty, the shrivelled cheek of famine to the full and mantling glow of life—binding up, and healing the broken heart with the tender surgery of love—mingling the genial warmth of sympathy with the freezing chill

of death, or plunging into the infected haunts of cruelty to let in the light and air of heaven upon the dungeon's suffocating gloom, and to lighten the burden of the prisoner's galling chains, or paving the way of the untutored generations with the light of truth and knowledge—bidding the asylum rise for the refuge of dethroned or reeling reason, or pursuing to relieve an unreturning Franklin, who had “steered Britain's oak” amidst the icebergs of the Arctic seas—or hearing the cry of weak and struggling freedom, though of different name and speech, yet impelled by a brotherhood of soul, he makes her ease his own, and flies the bounds of lands and waves, with life and fortune, to advance the wavering standard of Independence; in all these we but see charity towering and expanding into philanthropy, or general benevolence to man! Yes, charity adorns her annals with the shining names of Lafayette, Kosciusko, Pulaski, DeKalb, Penn, Bernard, Raikes, Neild, Sharp, Howard, Miss Dix, and scores of others: amongst the number, your own venerated Duncan Robertson, whose deeds of mercy will live in the memory of posterity long after the monumental pile of your city's gratitude shall have mingled with his sleeping dust. May your Association, which bears his name, ever live like him to bless, and receive his blessing in the “luxury of doing good.”

But O! what splendor shines in the life of the devoted Howard, the great apostle of modern philanthropy! How exalted! how sublime! Poetry and eloquence with their boldest wings can scarcely reach and hang their chaplets on his brow! I give you the tribute of Edmund Burke. “He visited all Europe, not to survey the sumptuousness of the palaces, or the stateliness of temples; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art; not to collect medals or to collate manuscripts, but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the gage and dimensions of misery, depression and contempt; to remember the forgotten, to attend

to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original, and it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of discovery—a circumnavigation of charity.”

In this connection I would remark, that woman will find the secret of her magic power in charity. Her beauty for a time may have the spell of the charmer, but it may fade like the roseate tint of the morning sky, while charity will hang like a rich, unfading garland on her brow.

Solomon, though he lavished all his glowing imagery on the portrait of the perfect woman, yet he had to dip his pencil into the celestial hues of charity before he could bring out the soft angelic tone, and make the picture live and breathe with the instinct of loveliness. “She stretched out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy, \* \* and in her tongue is the law of kindness.”

“O, such is lovely woman’s heart,  
Where human woes abound,  
She draws from sorrow’s breast the dart,  
And heals the anguished wound;  
Where’er she moves her path is strown  
With sweet affections’ flowers;  
The man is dead who will not own  
Fond woman’s magic powers.”—[MILFORD BARD.]

And now while Charity has piled her virtues up to the unselfish grandeur of philanthropy, where we may stand and feel the breath of heaven about us, and smell a fragrance, “E’en as if an angel shook his wing,” still she must build another round to cap her pile of human glory.

Now, gazing with the up-lifted eye of faith, when man catches a glimpse of that *divine philanthropy*, which points to the scars upon the hands and feet! to the scar of the spear which pierced the heart! to the scars of the *crown of thorns* on the benignant brow! and all to win his love! and he, in return, casts forth his love, like a sheet-anchor into the love of God, it is but charity in Religion! Yes, it is religion which holds the world at anchor, in the love of God! Religion is the telegraph which



links Heaven and Earth together; the medium through which the world is to be charged with the electric love of Heaven, until it shall glow with Millennial light and radiance.

Tell me not of the misfortune of commerce, or the wounded pride of science at the parting of the telegraphic link of continents. But snap the cable of religion, and the world drifts away into the terrible doom of a hopeless, God-forsaken orphanage! And while undefiled religion stands on the pinnacle of all human excellence, yet not a selfish plume waves in the turban of its glory. Though exalted, it seeks not to live in the dignity of passive purity and vigor. As "the sunbeam is not polluted by the filth on which it shines," so religion is not defiled by the depravity on which it bestows its labor. As its Divine Example gave his hands and feet to the nails—his head to the crown of thorns, and his heart to the spear—so religion gives *the hands, the feet, the head, the heart*, as tributes to the work of love. Yes, in imitation of its Divine Master, it is willing to honor the draft of the world on the exchequer of its love—to stoop to his humiliation, and take up and bear the cross—that symbol of fidelity—through all the war of tribulation, even unto death!

Thus armed with the bold emotions, which I have endeavored to illustrate, Charity advances on a world of woe to relieve, reform, and bring the honor of all nations at her feet.

With undrooping brow she meets the scowl of Pride—like an angel, "vital in every part," she dreads not the covert dagger of Envy and Revenge—she passes through the Bigot's furnace without the smell of fire on her mail of faith—she heeds not the shouting, panting throng who pursue the flying chariot of the noisy Goddess Fame, and, conscious of her strength, she marches on the Sevastopol of Avarice, which holds at bay the allied love of earth and heaven.

As hunger, nakedness, helplessness, and despair are deaf to the voice of reformation while crying for relief, hence charity first opens her campaign of relief by trampling down the edict of pride, which holds the poor in social quarantine. With ac-



tive, wide-working, on-pushing zeal, she enters to light up all the dark avenues of sorrow with the torch of love and hope—she pours her bounty along all the channels of helpless want—to warn of danger she plants her light-houses along all the dark and stormy coast of life, while she cruises about, with her life-boat, amidst all the wrecks of human misery and misfortune, and sends her flying commerce of relief from pole to pole. She invests a portion of her redundant wealth to make it subservient to relief, so that she may wake up the slumbering ranks of athletic sloth, and detail them with the moving army of robust mendicants into her shops, and fields, and vineyards, where they may live upon the fees of labor. She relieves herself of the cumbersome luggage of those who can work, but won't work, by sending them to the house of correction.

Promptness is her watch-word of relief. She says not to suffering want: "Go and come again, and to-morrow I will give." She stops not to take the gage of merit, nor sends the multitude home from the wilderness fainting with hunger by the way, but distributes her loaves and fishes on the ground.

At the time she bestows her bounty, she claims not to have purchased the right of reproaching poverty with its want, or misfortune with its misery. Reproach might turn the bounty into a barb of cruelty, and provoke a resentment which would defeat the work of reformation. Let the pharisaical donor beware of the searching probe of the insulted and retaliating poor! Perhaps he may thrust it to the quick of some moral ulcer worse than that of poverty. Perhaps flout the charge, that his boasted wealth was but the thrift of cunning, fraud, and moral robbing of the poor in the day of their calamity; or hurl upon him the fierce denunciation, that "whoso mocketh at the poor, reproacheth his Maker."

But charity marches on with her relief, levelling before her the walls of State and religious prejudices, dispensing to the stranger and the citizen—to the worshipper of Gezerim and Jerusalem—to the devotee of the cross and the crescent—to "the dipped and sprinkled"—to the orthodox and heterodox—

to the heathen and christian—to the saint and sinner, until she sweeps the frontiers of humanity.

In all this, "she seeketh not her own." If she were to drag her beneficiaries forth, as captives at a conqueror's chariot wheels, her work would end with the triumphal pageant. The poor and miserable would curse the charity that made itself the trumpet of their wretchedness or secret shame. Hence the largest munificence of selfishness will pale before the moral grandeur of the *widow's mite*! Yes, the memorial of the widow's mite is placed as a bow of *promise* in the darkened sky of human sorrow, to teach despair, that there is a secret love on earth that will "cast in all her living!" Oh! 'tis love which keeps despair alive! But the meagre crust and cup of water tendered by the gentle hand of Love, sealed with that covenant of secrecy, "tell no man," are more reviving than all the offerings of selfishness. But charity has her temple in the heart, where gratitude will sing her praise—and if gratitude will, unbidden, let it sing her praises in the gates, and shout hosannahs in her march of meekness!

But the relief of charity is but "the voice in the wilderness"—the forerunner of her reformation. If self-inflicted want, and misery were *relieved*, but not *reformed*, they would again obey the instincts of the former depravity, and again overtaken by the pursuing flood of calamity, they would cry for help. Thus charity might feed the vortex of iniquity with the bounty of a world without accomplishing any moral good. The treatment would not reach the disease. It would be, at best, only the humane quackery of "scraping a foul tongue to cure a disordered stomach."

Hence after charity has restored

"The smile of opulence in sorrow's face,"

and by her motive, sanctified her offering as the altar sanctifies the gift, and thus inspired misery with confidence in her friendship, through the portal of gratitude, she woos the heart out that she may fasten it by the falconry of love. Having thus secured her beneficiaries, she may pour in the mental light—

the moral light—the recreating power of religious light—and rekindle the fires of hope even in the breast of despair, until thousands who were in the decay of moral and social death, shall tremble and heave with new vitality, and come forth, as from the tombs, to the dignity of useful life! And oh! it is enough to move the heart of marble to see the helpless, friendless, homeless orphan taken to the sunny home—trained and educated, and led by the hand of a kind foster-father along the path of virtue and honor—then blessing him with an outfit to embark upon the sea of life—watching him, with yearning eye, pass the reefs and “wreckers’ lights,” until he gains and proudly rides the open sea—then see him stand upon the deck, place his hand upon his heart, then point to Heaven, and wave his *blessing* back! as the benefactor, suffocating with emotion, says, “It is enough! The debt is paid!

Perhaps it is but the touching tale of Duncan Robertson, and some one now present, who was raised from the dust to become an ornament of his race.

Charity now feels a growing strength in her reformation. Her blessed now live to bless. Howard-like, fired with zeal by experience and sympathy, they come as recruits to roll the tide of misery.

But Charity can never give the victor’s shout until she has put her foot on the neck of *avarice*, the *apollyon* of human passion. The finger of God has written the character of Avarice on its forehead, in that terse laconic, “*the root of all evil.*” We see it in the opening bud of childhood, choosing the best of every variety; we see it in the first juvenile contest over the bauble in the nursery; we see it in the glazing praises of its own goods, and the depreciation of another’s to accomplish its purpose of gain; we see it running through all the intermediates to all the extremes of crime; we see it in falsehood, theft, robbery, murder, perjury, bribery, piracy, treason, bartered virtue, the plunder of the charnal house reeking with human petrification, in canting hypocrisy making gain of godliness, and even in the sale of the Saviour of mankind for thirty pieces of

silver; we see it with greedy zeal scouring the surface and tearing out the bowels of the earth—turning the world up-side down in litigation, wrangling, strife, violence, mercenary politics, diplomacy, and smiting the nations with the lust of spoil, and unchaining the desolating hurricane of war. Yes, the Dragon once laid his paw on our weak but thriving colonies, and held them struggling and bleeding through seven dark and trying years, when his own loss of blood and treasure, not love, forced him to release the prey.

It is the nurse of pride, envy, and revenge. No civil law will trust its oath or honor as witness or judge in its own behalf. Civil government regards it as a thief at heart, and before it will install it to the custody of its treasures, it puts it under oaths, bonds, and sureties, and these fastenings it often makes fly, like the green withes from the hands of Sampson. With its insolence it lights up the scorn and wrath of heaven. Perhaps the only time that indignation ever lowered on the Saviour's brow, was when he scourged a sacrilegious avarice from the temple. The plunder and oppression of the poor swelled the cry which brought the devouring fire of Heaven upon abandoned Sodom, and turned the plowshare of destruction beneath the foundations of Jerusalem. In vain did Amos throw the voice of warning and of prophecy over the avarice-smitten Jerusalem! "Hear this, O ye, that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying when will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? that ye may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of wheat? The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood: and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt." [Amos viii. 4–8.]

And again, Ezekiel witnessing the oppression of the devoted



city, breaks forth: "Behold this was the iniquity of my sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy." [Ezek. xvi. 49.] And again: "The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy, yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I have found none. Therefore I have poured out my indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath." [Ezek. xxii. 29-31.]

Such is avarice, the scourge of earth and the scorn of Heaven. And although rebuked and seathed by the wrath of Heaven, it still has the will, if it had the power, to lug the world, as plunder on its back, into the temple of its idolatry. And it is the more dangerous, because it can assume the form of the angel of charity. It assumes with charity the propriety and innocence of activity, industry, and accumulation. But mark the difference. While charity is capable of all of self-denial, and makes frugality the brim of creature comforts, and mortgages all beyond to mercy—avarice knows no self-denial, and guards its profusion with the spiteful growl of the dragon.

Charity is like the waves produced by the falling stone in the lake, strongest near the centre, but circling out, and out

"Wher'er mankind and misery are found."

Avarice reverses the order of motion into the circling waves of the whirlpool, drawing every thing into, and closing the circle in itself.

And such is the foe that charity must conquer. But she has now discovered her elements of power—*love* her base—*relief* her fulcrum—*faith* her lever—with these she can solve the Archimædean puzzle, and give the world a move towards God.

Now let us imagine that Avarice, dreading an exterminating attack, has collected all his forces within some mighty walls, with which he has begirt his temple. Charity with all her earth-



ly forces, marches to the siege—parental affection to save the offspring—filial affection to defend the decrepit parent—magnanimity to spare the weak and defenceless—patriotism to fight for the general good—gratitude to defend the benefactor—and philanthropy, with its flying squadron, to charge upon every nick of danger. They prepare their trenches, breastworks, and scaling ladders, and move with all their engines and catapults to assault the frowning bulwarks. The wary foe has undermined, and blows up the breastworks with some infernal combustible, and meets and repulses the assailants with overwhelming power—they rally to the assault, and again recoil—and they continue to rally and recoil, until dejected, dispirited, and weakened by defeat, they falter, and must raise the siege without succor. But the stronghold must be taken. Suddenly a sound, as if the rumbling of chariots and horsemen, is heard in the skies—a sword is seen suspended over the temple! it is Religion coming, armed with the artillery of Heaven, to the rescue! Courage swells every heart, puissance leaps into every arm! and again they move to the charge, “still as the breeze, but dreadful as the storm!” Catapults and engines—the pulpit and the press, and all auxiliaries, play with a vigor unknown before! The ramparts yield! they press the foe to the porch of his temple where his eye rests on the glitter of its gold and glory—he makes his stand—fights with the desperation of the warrior, whose hand is “glued to the sword hilt with gore,” until he sees the flame mount like a conqueror from his temple’s roof! his temple gone! retreat impossible! with unparalleled desperation. before he will surrender, he swallows to save the remnant of his gold, as did many of the Jews at the siege of Jerusalem! But Charity puts her foot upon his neck, and turns the plow-share of love beneath the foundations of his strength.

And now having subdued and purified all the emotions of man, she begins to collect and arrange the different departments of a Providential government to witness a unity among all the nations of the earth.

As her first element of power was illustrated in parental and

filial affection, it will be clearly seen, that if parents and children but move in the sanctified bounds of reciprocal charity, we will have the reign of a miniature millennium in the domestic circle.

And if the theory be true, that every whole is made up with homogeneous and infinitesimal components, we must expect to see universal millennium in the sublime concrete of domestic millennia; families gathering into communities—the communities into States—and the States into the all-comprehending alliance, while Charity, with its delegates from on High, sits *Empress*, and rules the whole with the all-conquering sway of love, until her mortal Empire shall pass beneath the gates of Death. And then she sits the guardian of her garnered dust, until she receives the marching order from the “King of Kings,” when she unseals the sepulchre of time, and upward moves before the resurrection throngs of Faith and Hope, like the pillar of fire before the hosts of God of old, and enters the triumphal arch of Heaven amidst the waving palms of victory—the shout of the redeemed—the pealing choirs of Seraphs—and under her floating banner of Love, she lays the rebel world, as a trophy before the Throne of God.

And there her reign is but begun. Here mortal eye can endure but a glimpse of her glory, blushing from the folded bud; there we shall see her glory in unfolded bloom. There we shall see and know, that, with her own hands of love, she built the “Holy City”—reared its jasper walls and gates of pearl—paved all its streets with crystal gold—poured forth all its rivers of delight from the fountains of her own heart—lighted up its unfading day with the sunshine of her own face—wrought all its furniture of glory, robes of light, palms of victory, crowns and harps of gold; while all the universe of love, in full chorus joined, will fill Eternity with the music of her praise!



